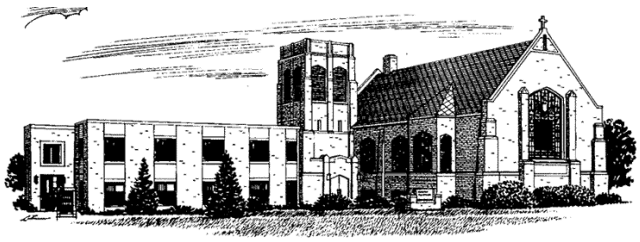

SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: *oleson@saronlutheran.org*

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative Assistant
Megan Savage Financial Secretary
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

March 2020

I want Jesus to walk with me; all along my pilgrim journey, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. In my trials, Lord…when I'm in trouble, Lord, …I want Jesus to walk with me. (ELW 325)

Those words of the African American spiritual reflect well the Lenten journey. Our prayer is that in every walk of our life we ask that Jesus be with us, just as he has promised. So how is it that we prepare ourselves to have him accompany us on this journey of life, especially as we ponder the wilderness areas we travel?

The 3 classic Lenten disciplines are fasting, prayer, and works of love. For some those disciplines take on the form of giving up a favorite food, or social media, or being quick to anger. For some the giving up of something means time or money for the adding of something else – time spent with a friend, or a donation to a worthy cause. It leads to the works of love. Truth is we don't have to DO any of those things for God to love us. On the other hand those things may remind us that God is with us on our journey,

Here are a few things for you to consider giving up or taking on for these six weeks of Lent. For those with Mondays available, consider starting your week with prayer group at 11 a.m. It's a quiet time where you can join in prayer aloud or silently. Perhaps you may want to help out with Golden Hammers on Wednesday mornings or attend the mid-week soup suppers and worship time. These come alongside Sunday morning opportunities. Prayers for the healing of the nation will be offered on Sunday, March 8. Then, on the Sundays of March 15, 22, and 29 there will be discussions during the 9:30 Learning Hour on what it means to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation, that is a congregation intentional in its welcome of those in the LGBTQIA+ community. (See related article.)

I pray that your Lenten journey will be filled with Jesus moments, those moments of thanksgiving that Jesus walks with each of us.

Pastor Joan

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers:
Arla Huelsberg is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** is at Woodland Terrace; **Virginia Anserello** is at Pine Ridge, Stevensville.

Office Hours at Saron
Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:15 AM - 11 AM (approximately)
Financial Secretary: Megan Savage; Tues & Thurs 5:30 PM
financial@saronlutheran.org
Call the office for more information.
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in March 2020

March 1 - Michael Hoodlebrink
4 – Krin Jurgensen
Caleb Pudell
8 – Austin Kamala
9 – Colbe Pudell
10 - Brad Frey
12 - Susan Rood
14 - Ruth Stelling
17 – Mia Bradley
18 – Peter Johnson
Constance Slater
19 - Karleann Stankiewicz
Alexander Tzouanakis
20 – Nicole (de la Foret) Rick
21 - Kaitlin (Huff) Hooper
22 – Janet Oleson
25 - Jim Nicholas
26 - Susan Bailey
27 - Eloise Moely
Shelly Stankiewicz
28 - Matthew Gacek
Zachary Ark

Happy Anniversary Wishes to the following Members in March 2020

March 2 - Tom and Janet Taylor
11 - Richard and Marlene Schalon

For additions or corrections, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

FORTIFY & fly

The stained glass windows in our church are indicative of the people that worship within. It takes many pieces to make up those windows, lots of different shapes and colors. Each piece is unique and offers something important to the design. When you step back, you see how they work together to create a cohesive image and it's breathtaking. *We* work together like that. *We* are breathtaking. As the maintenance continues on the stained glass windows to protect them and restore their vibrancy, think about how vital you are as part of the congregation. We wouldn't be the same without you.

As of the end of January 2020, we had collected $230,831 towards our 3 year pledge total of $371,165. As always, thank you for your support!

Worship

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sunday, March 1 -
First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Sunday, March 8 –
Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17

Sunday, March 15 –
Third Sunday in Lent
Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 95
Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42

Sunday, March 22 –
Fourth Sunday in Lent
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 23
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

Sunday, March 29 –
Fifth Sunday in Lent
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

Nursery News

Please join us in this service we provide. We have a great group that provides a safe place for children to spend all or part of the worship service. We can work with many different schedules and adjust as needed. You would be the needed second person to be in the room with our childcare provider. Our little ones have fun and their parents can enjoy worship without distraction. Please let Marilyn Lucy, Krin Jurgensen, or Pastor Oleson know you are willing to help.

ASH WEDNESDAY
February 26, 2020
12:15 & 7:00 PM
Imposition of Ashes
and Holy Communion

Lenten Mid-Week Activities
Wednesday Evenings
March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1
Soup Supper 6:00 PM
Holden Evening Prayer 7:00 PM

2020 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2020 flower calendar is posted. Cost: $25.00/vase. This is an opportunity for you to give flowers in honor or memory of someone. The church orders the flowers (unless you indicate otherwise) and you can take the flowers home after 2nd service.

PARKING

During the cold and wintry months, please consider leaving the parking spaces closest to Saron for those who find it most difficult to navigate the snow and ice. This, even as we try to have our walks and parking spaces clear! Thanks!

Youth

Are you in grades 6-12? Please join us for youth group activities! For more info, contact Scott at *scottgaspari@outlook.com or (Cell) 847-373-8825.*

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

SUNDAY LEARNING HOUR NEWS

There are learning groups for ages 3-adult on Sundays at 9:40. This includes younger youth, confirmation aged youth (gr. 6-8), and adults. High school youth are welcomed at the adult forum where a new study begins, entitled "Understanding the Old Testament," from Great Courses. Newcomers are always welcome

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

On Saturday, March 7th, Saron Men's Monthly Devotion and Breakfast group will meet at the Galley Grill on Red Arrow Highway in Stevensville at 9:00 am. The Galley Grill is on the Super 8 Motel property at 4296 Red Arrow Highway just north of the Tyler Honda car dealership. We welcome new participants

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Men's Bible Study will not meet during lent. Our Bible study will resume on April 14 (the Tuesday after Easter). For more information call Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or Don Hafer at 269-985-3637.

As the Bible says "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

THURSDAY MORNING STUDY

The Thursday morning group will not meet during Lent. We will resume our studies on April 16 at 9:30 a.m.

EPHESUS STUDY GROUP

The Ephesus group will not meet in February due to scheduling conflicts. Instead, the group will meet again on Sunday, March 22 at the home of Brad and Marilyn Frey, beginning at 5:00. We will complete Session three of the study series in the November 19, 2019 issue of Gather magazine, titled "Stewarding the Gift of Joy." The description of the study says "In the God who has redeemed us from despair, we find true, inescapable joy." If anyone would like to try out this group to see if it fits for you, you would be welcome.

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Join us March 1st, 6:30 in the upstairs lounge, for "The Story of Arthur Truluv", by Elizabeth Berg. This is Berg at her best. "An emotionally powerful novel about three people who each lose the one they love most, only to find second chances where they least expect them" (Amazon). Reading this book will remind us what it means to be truly human.

Then on April 5th, we have an interesting choice for you. "Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague", by Geraldine Brooks. The tale of a brave young woman during the plague in 17th century England doesn't sound like a recommendation for a good read. However, "Brooks blends love and learning, loss and renewal into a spellbinding and unforgettable read". (Amazon)

If you love to read and enjoy talking about books, we'd love to have you join us. All are welcome. Questions? Call Kathy Cowall (269-428-0354) or kcowall@hotmail.com.

"Books are no more threatened by Kindle than stairs by elevators." (Stephen Fry)

Women of the ELCA.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle will meet on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, after the Lenten Soup Supper and worship service to work on a service project. Gift bags will be assembled for Saron's homebound and nursing home/assisted living members. Everyone should bring a small container of hand lotion and an Easter card.

SINGERS AND LISTENERS

This was from February 16th for the Annual Dorcas Circle Hymn Sing.

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP IN 2020

During the February 8, 2020 Church Council Retreat session, Deanna Deaton and Jim Manore were selected to oversee this very important and active hospitality ministry. As in the past, we are reaching out to all of Saron's members to sign up to either "Lead" or "Help" with the following events or responsibilities:

- Weekly Soup Suppers (Advent (4) & Lenten (5))
- Special Meals (Annual Meeting, Easter Breakfast, Tiscornia Labor Day Picnic)
- Blossomtime Parade Picnic
- Summer Mid-Week Beach service/dinner at Lion's Park (3 of them)
- Coffee hours following each and every 8:30 am and 11:00 am service
- Cakes ordered and served for special events such as baptisms

Included in this newsletter is a "Hospitality Ministry" sign-up sheet that lists all of the events we host for Saron's members. Please take a moment to reflect on how you can assist us with one of Saron's most important ministries! After completion, please mail it to the church or hand it to an usher at a church service.

The Lenten season begins with Ash Wednesday services on February 26, 2020. During the Lenten season there will be a soup/salad/dessert potluck followed by a service every Wednesday evening beginning March 4, at 6:00 PM until Holy Week. There is a sign-up sheet posted on the kiosk in the Narthex of the church for your convenience.

There is also a sign-up sheet for volunteers to bring in Sunday morning refreshments.

The good news is that we already have a family to work on the Easter Breakfast and Blossom Parade picnic! More are welcome!

Remember….families, groups or youth can sign up to host an event!

Deanna Deaton and Jim Manore, Co-Chairs

Outreach

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

A task force at Saron has been looking at issues of welcome and inclusivity and how to best live into our mission of "joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!" As noted, the task force is working toward the possibility of Saron becoming a Reconciling In Christ congregation, that is a congregation intentional in its welcome of those in the LGBTQIA+ community.

During the month of March we will have conversations during the Learning Hour to help in our discussions and discernment. They will be at 9:40 a.m. in the dining room. They are scheduled for March 15, 22, and 29 and will include information about the logistics of becoming an RiC congregation, why it is important to be specific about our welcome, terminology, as well as those clunky questions folks may have like, "I don't 'get' trans" or "Is this a gay church now?"

We have invited two resource persons to be present on March 22 in order to walk with us in the discussions. Diane Madej is from our synod's "Open Hearts. Open Church" Task Force and Merton Spencer is the regional representative from Reconciling Works, which is based out of St. Paul, MN.

We also have available at Saron's kiosk several resources that can help individuals further explore various topics and aid in our conversations and welcoming. Serving on the task force are Kati and Nick Hooper, Laurel Gacek, Laura Hicks, Darlene Kiessel and Pastor. Contact any of these folks if you would like to know more.

NOISY OFFERING

During 2019 Saron collected $1,015.20 in noisy offerings taken the first Sunday of the month. These monies were donated to ELCA World Hunger.

In her thank you, the Rev. Robin Brown, ELCA Mission Funding Director, wrote: *Dear people of Saron, Thank you for this gift and for your on-going commitment to end hunger and poverty for good!*

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

Thank you to those who prepared the food, baked cookies, and served at the Soup Kitchen on January 23.

The Soup Kitchen is open 7 days a week, every day of the year. Hunger in our community is an ongoing concern. Thank you for supporting Saron in this outreach opportunity as a part of the ELCA's mission of *God's Gifts, Our Hands!*

Large cans of fruit are always needed at the Soup Kitchen & can be dropped off anytime at the church. Any questions or to volunteer or provide cookies please contact Kathie Bradley at 269- 921-4665.

Interfaith Action
SW Michigan Peace & Justice Collaborative

The purpose of this collaborative of faith communities is to provide a mechanism for ongoing interfaith discussion, education, and action. More information can be found at https://swmichinterfaith.org/

Plans are being developed for the showing of the documentary "Pittsburgh to Paris" with discussion afterward focusing on the effects of climate change locally. This will be sponsored by Interfaith Action's Green Earth working group. Watch for more details.

Support

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, e-mail Matt Bradley to receive the account number for which the shares will be transferred to. Once the transaction has been completed, e-mail Matt Bradley the name of the stock, the number of shares, and the date of the transfer. This allows the transaction to be completed and ensures it is included on your giving statement. Thanks! Matt Bradley, treasurer

TIME TO RENEW "LIVING LUTHERAN" MAGAZINE

"*Living Lutheran,"* the magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, keeps us informed of events and issues impacting Lutherans. Subscribers also have access online to more than 9,000 archived articles and 400 Study guides. Those that have been enjoying *"Living Lutheran"* this past year or those who would like to begin receiving *"Living Lutheran"* will be able to purchase or renew for the price of $9.00 a year. Please make out a check to Saron and write "Living Lutheran" in the memo area of your check or place cash in an envelope clearly identified with your name, the amount enclosed and the words *"Living Lutheran."* This can be handed in to the office or placed in the offering plate. We want to get all of the subscriptions in as soon as possible so that there will be no lapse in current subscriptions.

Facilities

WILL YOU VACUUM?

Our cleaning service attends to Saron's needs every other week. On the off-week, especially during the winter months, a vacuum of the sanctuary, narthex, and entry way is needed. Are you available and willing to do this? A sign-up sheet is available. Preferred vacuum times are between 8 pm on Thursday and Saturday evening. Thank you!

Council News

Saron's Council Members – 2020

Karen Johnson (269-983-2800 – President
Krin Jurgensen (269-369-4493 – Vice President
Joe Ulrey (313-718-2563) – Treasurer
Scott Kohs (269-967-4017) – Secretary
+++
Krin Jurgensen (269-369-4493 – Worship
Brad Frey (921-8618) – Facilities
Molly Becker – Youth
Don Hafer (269-470-2255) – Support
Matt Bradley (419-306-5780) - Support
Jim Manore (269-983-5915) – Hospitality
Deanna Deaton (429-9086) - Hospitality
Kristen Harper (277-9277) – Learning, Youth
Karen Johnson (269-983-2800) – Outreach
Scott Kohs(269-967-4017) - Outreach
Joan Oleson (983-1273) office;
983-2475 home) – Pastor

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

March 2020

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

We are looking to expand our hospitality leadership team.
Guidance offered before you begin!

I'd like to help with **Mid-Week meals (Advent/Lent)**: Help _____

I'd like to help with **Mid-Week Beach Worship (summer – Lions Park)**: Help _____

I'd like to help with **coordinating coffee hour snacks (Sundays)**: Help _____

I'd like to help with **special dinners:**

Tiscornia Beach Worship/Potluck (Labor Day weekend) - Help _____

Annual meeting (January) - Help _____

Easter Breakfast - Help _____

I'd like to help with **Blossomtime Parade Picnic (1st Sat in May):** Help _____

I'd like to help with special **cakes (baptisms, etc) - order/pick up/serve:** Help _____

Name: _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Saron 2020
March Volunteer Schedule

	March 1 First Sunday in Lent		March 8 Second Sunday in Lent		March 15 Third Sunday in Lent		March 22 Fourth Sunday in Lent		March 29 Fifth Sunday in Lent	
	8:30	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**
Assisting minister	Sue Rood	Connie Slater	Pauline Ngonyani	Bob Deaton	Sue Rood	Bob Kynast	Eric Standen	Denise Cook	Marilyn Frey	Dennis Lundgren
Reader/ Comm. Asst.	Susan Harris	Don Hafer	Karen Hinckley	Judi Huff	Sally Schmuhl	Dan Fortenbacher	Steve Bell	Matt Bradley	Eric Standen	Laurel Gacek
Ushers	Dave & Sue Bailey	Dave & Kathie Bradley	Eric & Deb Standen	Pat Breyen & Laura Kroening	Fran Richards & Elizabeth Kunkel	John Olson & Krin Jurgensen	Keith Stevens & Jim Manore	Peter & Karen Johnson	Walt & Sally Schmuhl	Scott & Lindsay Gaspari
Acolyte	Brooke Henderson	Grant Grcek & Ava Osgood	Troy Burrow	Mia Bradley	Eric Burrow	Meredith Gacek & Addison Osgood	TBD	Alaina Bradley	Brooke Henderson	Molly Becker
Nursery 1st	Marilyn Lucy	Meredith Gacek	Mary Alice Brunner	Karen Hinckley	Allison Rood	Mary Kynast	Deb Standen	Lindsay Gaspari	Jenna Henderson	Laura Stark
Nursery 2nd	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul	Emily Gaul
Bldg. close		Dave and Kathie Bradley		Ken & Suzy Kohs		Bob Hopkins		Brad and Marilyn Frey	Bob and Mary Kynast	
Snacks	Irma Gorman	Carol Hafer		Fran Bolson		Darlene Kiessel & Clem Brueck		Pat Breyen		
Flowers		Open		open		Karen Johnson in honor of Peter's B'd		Ron and Fran Bolson in honor of their anniversary	Scott and Lindsay Gaspari in honor of Elizabeth's B'd	

MARCH 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 6:30 p.m. 1st. Sunday Book Discussion Group	**2** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**3**	**4** 9:15 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Worship	**5** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**CWU 6** World Day of Prayer 1:00 p.m. at Union Memorial A.M.E. Church	**7** 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Breakfast at the Galley Grill **Remember to change your clocks forward 1hour before bedtime**
8 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes	**9** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 6:00 p.m. Support Comm. Newsletter articles due	**10**	**11** 9:15 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Worship Deborah Circle	**12** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**13**	**14**
15 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes	**16** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting	**17** 12:00 p.m. Kalamazoo Conference Pastors at Saron 4:00 p.m. Vasa	**18** 9:15 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Worship	**19** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**20**	**21**
22 5:00 p.m. Ephesus Group at Frey's home	**23** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**24**	**25** 9:15 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Worship	**26** 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**27**	**28**
29	**30** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	**31**	1	2	3	4